

WHAT IS RENT REASONABLENESS?

Rent reasonableness is a test to assure that a fair rent is paid for units selected for participation in the Section 8 program and that the program does not have the effect of inflating rents in the community.

The Housing Authority must document on a case-by-case basis that the approved rent is reasonable based on current rents for comparable unassisted units.

Rent reasonableness determinations must be made before the Housing Authority approves the initial rent to the owner. Total gross rent—the contract rent plus utilities paid by the tenant—may never exceed reasonable rent.

CAN THE CONTRACT RENT BE INCREASED DURING THE TERM OF THE HAP CONTRACT IF THE OWNER'S EXPENSES INCREASE?

Yes. On the anniversary date of the lease, the owner may request an annual adjustment. Special adjustments may also be made to reflect increases in expenses from general increases in real estate property taxes, utilities or similar costs. Special adjustments are permitted to the extent the owner can demonstrate that the increases have increased operating costs and are not compensated for by the annual adjustments.

Because the tenant share is based on a fixed payment standard, determined by the Housing Authority according to the unit's number of bedrooms, the tenant will generally pay the increased amount of rent.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL
717-249-1315 or toll-free 1-866-683-5907**



HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM SECTION 8

INFORMATION FOR PROPERTY OWNERS AND MANAGERS

**Cumberland County Housing Authority
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Carlisle, PA 17013**

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HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM

The Housing Choice Voucher Program is a program designed to help lower-income families and elderly persons afford housing in good condition.

How the Program Works

- **1) Application** - A family applies to the agency to enroll in the program. (“Family” also includes elderly, disabled and displaced persons who live alone.)
- **2) Certification** - The family is certified by the agency to participate in the program.
- **3) Housing Selection** - The family chooses a place within 60 days that meets program housing standards and rent reasonableness limits. Their present dwelling may qualify too.
- **4) Negotiation** - You and the family come to agreement on lease terms.
- **5) Agency Review** - The agency evaluates the lease and inspects the unit to make sure they both meet program standards. You and the family must inspect the unit too.
- **6) Contract** - You and the agency execute a *housing assistance payments (HAP) contract* in order for payments to begin.
- **7) Payments** - The agency pays you part of the rent each month. The family pays the rest.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

CAN AN OCCUPANT STAY IN HIS PRESENT UNIT AND STILL GET ASSISTANCE?

Yes—if the occupant is eligible, the unit meets minimum standards, and the rent plus utilities to be paid directly by the tenant is at or below rent reasonableness limits.

WHAT KIND OF HOUSING IS ELIGIBLE?

Any type of rental housing—single-family dwelling to high rise apartment—is eligible.

HOW DOES THE OWNER RECEIVE HIS FULL RENT PAYMENT?

Through housing assistance payments (HAP payments). The Housing Authority pays the difference between the contract rent and what the tenant pays.

HOW MUCH RENT DOES THE TENANT PAY?

The tenant’s rent share is based on 30% of their adjusted income and the *payment standard* for the number of bedrooms in the unit. The 30% figure takes into account the number of dependents and the cost of dependent child care and, for elderly or disabled persons, any extraordinary medical expenses.

HOW OFTEN ARE HAP PAYMENTS MADE TO THE OWNER?

Payments are made monthly for the duration of the housing assistance payments (HAP) contract as long as all obligations under the contract are met. A sample of the HAP contract is available upon request.